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9D-HL-20014
PATENT

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for controlling locking a lid of a washing machine, the washing machine including an agitation element and a basket, said method comprising the steps of:

sensing a spin speed associated with a spin speed of at least one of the agitation element and the basket; and

causing the lid to be locked when the sensed spin speed ~~exceed~~ exceeds a first predetermined speed; and

causing the lid to be unlocked when the sensed spin speed is below a second predetermined speed different from the first predetermined speed.

2. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein sensing a spin speed comprises the step of sensing rotation of a drive shaft for driving at least one of the agitation element and the basket.

3. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 2 wherein the drive shaft extends from a clutch system and at least one magnet is secured to the shaft, and a sensor, and wherein sensing spin speed comprises the steps of:

operating the sensor to generate a signal when the magnet passes by the sensor;
and

generating a voltage signal representative of a spin speed based on the sensor generated signal.

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4. (original) A method in accordance with Claim 3 wherein the sensor generated signal is a square wave, and wherein a frequency to voltage converter is utilized to generate a voltage signal from the sensor generated square wave signal.

5. (currently amended) A method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein causing the lid to be locked when the sensed spin speed ~~exceed~~ exceeds a first predetermined speed comprises the step of energizing a lid lock solenoid with the sensed spin speed exceeds the first predetermined speed.

6. (canceled)

7. (currently amended) A method in accordance with Claim 6 1 wherein the first predetermined speed is greater than the second predetermined speed.

8. (currently amended) A lid lock system for a washing machine, the washing machine including a lid, an agitation element, a basket, and a transmission and clutch system, the transmission and clutch system including a drive shaft coupled to the agitation element and basket for causing the agitation element and basket to spin, said lid lock system comprising:

a sensor for generating an output signal associated with a spin speed of at least one of the agitation element and basket;

a lid lock solenoid for controlling operation of a lid lock; and

a control circuit for energizing the lid lock solenoid based on the sensor output signal,

wherein said control circuit energizes said solenoid to lock the lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that exceeds a first predetermined speed, and de-energizes said solenoid to unlock the lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that is below a second predetermined speed different from the first predetermined speed.

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9. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 further comprising at least one magnet secured to the drive shaft.

10. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 wherein the sensor comprises a Hall effect sensor.

11. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 wherein the control circuit comprises at least one flip flop.

12. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 11 wherein the control circuit further comprises a timer.

13. (original) A lid lock system according to Claim 8 wherein the control circuit comprises a frequency to voltage converter.

14. (currently amended) A washing machine comprising:

a cabinet comprising an opening;

a lid movable from and between an open position and a closed position over said opening;

a lid lock for locking said lid in a closed position;

a basket mounted within said cabinet;

an agitation element mounted within said basket;

a drive system coupled to said agitation element and to said basket; and

a lid lock circuit comprising a sensor for generating an output signal associated with a spin speed of at least one of said agitation element and basket, a lid lock solenoid for

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controlling operation of said lid lock, and a control circuit for energizing said lid lock solenoid based on the sensor output signal,

wherein said control circuit energizes said solenoid to lock said lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that exceeds a first predetermined speed, and de-energizes said solenoid to unlock said lid when the sensor output signal is indicative of a speed that is below a second predetermined speed different from the first predetermined speed.

15. (original) A washing machine according to Claim 14 wherein said lid lock circuit further comprises at least one magnet secured to the drive shaft.

16. (original) A washing machine according to Claim 14 wherein said sensor comprises a Hall effect sensor.

17. (original) A washing machine according to Claim 8 wherein said control circuit comprises at least one of a flip flop, a timer, and a frequency to voltage converter.